

Vermont Department of Corrections Annual Internal Report - Sexual Abuse

An Analysis of 2012 & 2013 Data



Prepared by: Wendy Yoder, Interim PREA Director – August 29, 2014

The Vermont Department of Corrections has long been committed to preventing sexual abuse, and promoting safety and security for all inmates and staff.

Introduction

Each year the VT DOC collects accurate and uniform data for every allegation of sexual abuse and completes the Survey of Sexual Victimization Report (SSV). The SSV report provides information on every allegation of sexual abuse and it is posted on the VT DOC's Public Web Page. The following analysis is the VT DOC's annual internal report focused on confirmed inmate on inmate and staff on inmate sexual abuse incidents. This report provides a comparison of incidents from 2012 and 2013 and is utilized by the VT DOC PREA Director to identify problem areas and formulate corrective measures in efforts to prevent future incidents of sexual abuse. This is the first annual internal report on sexual abuse as a result of VT DOC's implementation of the Final PREA Prison and Jail Standards.

Data

The attached summary provides the number of substantiated staff sexual misconduct, staff sexual harassment, inmate on inmate sexual abuse and inmate on inmate sexual harassment incidents.

The number of substantiated staff on inmate sexual misconduct incidents decreased from 3 in 2012 to 2 in 2013. The number of substantiated staff sexual harassment incidents decreased from 1 in 2012 to 0 in 2013. This difference may be directly related to PREA policy and education efforts. Specifically, the PREA Office added the PREA Compliance & Audit Trainer position. Adding this position increased the level of PREA related support and education offered to our facilities.

The number of inmate on inmate substantiated nonconsensual sexual acts increased from 1 in 2012 to 5 in 2013. The number inmate on inmate sexually abusive contacts increased from 7 in 2012 to 12 in 2013. In 2013, we experienced an increase in the total number of incidents reports involving a sexual component. The increase in reports of sexual abuse may be attributed to the focused inmate sexual abuse education that began in 2013. This training built on previous inmate orientations and included new information published with the 2012 Final PREA Standards.

Problem Area Identification & Corrective Measures

Staff Sexual Misconduct

Location of Incidents: There is no apparent theme regarding the location in the facilities where the 2012 and 2013 incidents occurred.

Classification of Staff Involved: Of the five incidents substantiated in 2012 and 2013, two (or 40%) of the incidents involved a contract medical or mental health practitioner.

Corrective Measures: Beginning in 2013, the PREA Office developed and enhanced numerous PREA and Staff Sexual Misconduct training curriculums. The PREA Director and the PREA Compliance & Audit Trainer traveled to each facility to present these curriculums to all staff (including contractors and volunteers). The training curriculums augmented previous PREA & Staff Misconduct training and included new information from the 2012 Final PREA Standards. Attending PREA and Staff Misconduct orientation is a requirement before any staff, volunteer or contract person is allowed unsupervised time with inmates in our facilities.

Inmate Non-Consensual Acts

Location of Incidents: All inmate on inmate non-consensual acts occurred in cells where both the victim and perpetrator were residing.

Corrective Measures: In 2013, VT DOC began implementing inmate screening for risk of victimization and abusiveness. The agency uses the information from this risk screening to inform housing and bed assignments with the goal of keeping separate those inmates at high risk of being sexually victimized from those at high risk of being sexually abusive.

Inmate Sexually Abusive Contacts

Location of Incidents: Nine of the 12 substantiated incidents in 2013 took place in common areas inside and outside the living units.

Corrective Measures: In 2013, inmate sexual abuse education was elevated in our facilities. This training built on previous inmate orientations and included some new information published with the 2012 Final PREA Standards. In early 2014, the VT DOC expanded its inmate education efforts to include PREA Newsletters, PREA Posters, and a comprehensive and consistent PREA information section for our facility handbooks.

Highest Facility Numbers for Inmate on Inmate Incidents

Facility Locations: Over the period of 2012 and 2013, Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF) reported nine substantiated incidents, Southern State Correctional Facility (SSCF) reported seven substantiated incidents and Northeast Correctional Complex (NECC) reported five substantiated incidents.

Corrective Measures: Beginning in 2013, the VT DOC PREA Office staff visited six of our seven facilities to provide comprehensive sexual abuse education to the inmate population. This initiative augmented our previous inmate PREA Orientation including Power Point Presentations and informational flyers. CRCF staff provided similar comprehensive inmate sexual abuse education to their inmate population.

Predatory and Vulnerable Classification Strategies

In 2012 and a portion of 2013, VT DOC identified potentially vulnerable and potentially predatory inmates primarily from incidents that occurred or by past history.

Corrective Actions: In 2013 the department began a process to screen all inmates (existing population, new intakes and facility to facility transfers). All new inmates are screened again within 30 days of the intake process. Inmates who receive a PREA designation are reviewed and a facility plan is created to determine safe bed and housing assignments. The department is in the process of expanding these facility plans to include work, education and programming assignments.

Incident Review and Follow-up

The information available from the incident reviews from 2012 and 2013 inmate on inmate incidents needs improvement.

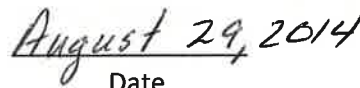
Corrective Measures: The department is currently formalizing the incident review and corrective measure process to include review and sign off by key personnel at both the facility and central office level.

Conclusion

Inmate sexual safety has and continues to be a top priority for the VT DOC. The requirements outlined in the Final PREA Standards provide direction for the department to expand its efforts toward preventing, detecting and responding to sexual abuse. Implementing the corrective measures outlined in this report will ensure that the VT DOC continues taking steps toward achieving inmate sexual safety.



Prepared BY: Wendy Yoder, VT DOC Interim PREA Director



Date



Approved By: Andy Pallito – VT DOC Commissioner



Date

Vermont Department of Corrections 2012 - 2013
Survey of Sexual Victimization (SSV)

| YEAR | NONCONSENSUAL SEXUAL ACTS (Sexually Abusive Penetration) | SEXUALLY ABUSIVE CONTACTS | SEXUAL HARRASSMENT | STAFF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT | STAFF SEXUAL HARRASSMENT | TOTAL SUBSTANTIATED INCIDENTS |
|----------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Substantiated | Substantiated | Substantiated | Substantiated | Substantiated | |
| 2012 | 1 | 7 | n/a | 3 | 1 | 12 |
| 2013 | 5 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 23 |
| LOCATION | | | | | | |
| CRCF | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 0 | 3 | n/a | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| 2013 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| MVRCF | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 1 | 0 | n/a | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2013 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| NECC | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 0 | 1 | n/a | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 2013 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| NSCF | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 0 | 0 | n/a | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2013 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| NWSCF | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 0 | 1 | n/a | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2013 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| SESCF | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 0 | 1 | n/a | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2013 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| SSCF | | | | | | |
| 2012 | 0 | 2 | n/a | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| 2013 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |

Note: Reporting Inmate on Inmate Sexual Harassment to the Department of Justice SSV began with 2013 data

